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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3102
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2587
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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8616
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 7145
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7034
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 6477
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 9417
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 0703
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 7630
RHMFISS/USFJ
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/5AF YOKOTA AB JA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000901

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

OSD/APSA FOR SHINN/SEDNEY/HILL/BASALLA; USFJ FOR
J00/J01/J3/J5; STATE FOR EAP/J, EEB/TRA FOR BYERLY
PASS TO USTR FOR BEEMAN
PASS TO DOT FOR GRETCH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/01/2018
TAGS: [EAIR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: TOKYO GOVERNMENT PRESENTS YOKOTA AFB DUAL USE TO
ACCJ

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer. Reason 1.4 (b)(d)

11. (C) Summary. During the past week, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) gave presentations to a number of commercial organizations including the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) and an open Town Hall meeting at the Tokyo Hyatt Hotel. During these presentations, TMG speakers claimed civil-military dual use of Yokota Air Force Base is good for Tokyo's economy. However, ACCJ Transportation and Logistics Committee members, a number of whom are executives from major U.S. air carriers, noted the proposal is not economically viable and could make Tokyo area airport operations even less efficient than they already are. End Summary.

TOKYO AIRPORTS AT CAPACITY, LIMITED BY YOKOTA AIR SPACE?

12. (SBU) During the March 31 presentation at the ACCJ Transportation and Logistics Committee Meeting, TMG Counselor Tamotsu Takase argued the two major Tokyo airports now operate at full capacity, the airspace allotted to Yokota AFB makes it impossible to increase the number of flights per hour, and using Yokota AFB for dual use would be economically advantageous.

13. (SBU) ACCJ members pointed out the reason the Tokyo area airports appear to operate at full capacity is because Japan uses twice the international standard for airspace interval. Thus, if their airports employed the standard used in the U.S., Europe and elsewhere, there would be significant unused capacity at both Haneda and Narita. One airline executive noted that when the fourth runway is complete at Haneda, the airport will be only able to handle 40 flights per hour, compared with 100 flights per hour at Newark and JFK, each

with three runways. With the fourth runway, Haneda should be easily capable of 110 flights per hour, another ACCJ member stated.

14. (SBU) One of the airline executives in the ACCJ pointed out that while airspace is an issue for routes, it is not an issue for the runway. Airspace problems may mean aircraft would need to fly longer, more circuitous routes, but it does not change the number of aircraft that can take off/land in an hour, he explained.

15. (SBU) ACCJ members also pointed out the Yokota area is already too densely populated to accommodate a bigger facility. Moreover, airlines need greater concentration and connectivity. Splitting the hub, as one airline executive explained, hurts business. Already customers who want to fly from an international destination to a domestic location in Japan must fly to Narita, get on the bus to Haneda -- bringing their suitcases along with them -- and go an hour and a half to transit to domestic flights at Haneda. The ideal, he continued, is to have one large airport, making transit between flights easier. Adding a third airport to the Tokyo area will only exacerbate the drawbacks of transiting through Tokyo.

Comment

16. (SBU) The ACCJ as an institution has not yet published its position on using Yokota for civilian air flights in addition to military use. Opinions stated at the meeting, therefore, are personal and did not reflect the official ACCJ position -- at least not yet. After the TMG representatives

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left, ACCJ members, speaking informally and personally, asserted the reason for the TMG's proposal is to line the pockets of construction companies as Japan has long done, building too many regional airports that are already complaining and losing money because of lack of air traffic.

End Comment.
SCHIEFFER